

DAILY BRIEF

For the 2021 Legislative Session



FROM APRIL 7, 2021

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SB 148 – Relating to Beverage Law

On Wednesday, April 7, [SB 148](#) by Senator Jennifer Bradley (R-Orange Park) was read a second and third time on the Senate floor and passed with 38 yeas and 2 nays.

Under current law, qualifying restaurants may be licensed to sell beer, wine, and liquor for consumption on the premises only. This bill repeals the prohibition of sale for off-premises consumption of alcohol, thereby allowing restaurants to sell sealed containers of “alcohol-to-go” in conjunction with the sale of food on the same order.

SB 148 will now go to the House for consideration.

AIF supports legislation removing antiquated regulations on restaurant and lodging establishments to encourage the development of new businesses and increase the financial success of existing businesses, especially during the pandemic.

ENVIRONMENT

SB 2516 – Relating to Water Storage North of Lake Okeechobee

On Wednesday, April 7, [SB 2516](#), sponsored by the Senate Appropriations Committee, was read a second and third time on the Senate floor and passed unanimously with 40 yeas and 0 nays.

The bill requires the South Florida Water Management District in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to expedite implementation of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project (LOWRP). The LOWRP is a project that provides water storage north of Lake Okeechobee.

The bill provides a \$50 million annual appropriation for the LOWRP.

SB 2516 will now go to the House for consideration.

AIF supports efforts to capture and store water north of Lake Okeechobee which will support the reduction of harmful discharges from the lake thus preserving Florida's most important natural resource and the businesses that depend on clean water.

EMPLOYERS

SB 912 - Relating to Tolling and Extension of Permits and Other Authorizations During States of Emergency

On Wednesday, April 7, [SB 912](#) by Senator Ben Albritton (R-Bartow) was read a second and third time on the Senate floor and passed unanimously with 40 yeas and 0 nays.

The bill adds certain permits and development agreements, including consumptive use permits and local government development agreements, to the current emergency tolling statute. The tolling statute allows for the tolling of the time of the state of emergency plus an additional six months. For example, if a state of emergency is declared for a hurricane that lasts for two months, at the end of the state of emergency, a permit holding entity can exercise the tolling option and receive those two months back to the permitted time allotment and add on an additional six months. The bill is retroactive to include the entirety of the COVID-19 state of emergency.

SB 912 will now go to the House for consideration.

AIF supports legislation that prevents Florida businesses from being penalized on permitted time due to a state of emergency that is out of their control. Economic recovery after an emergency is imperative and businesses drive recovery via employment and production, none of which is possible if an operating permit has expired.

INSURANCE

SB 76 - Relating to Property Insurance

On Wednesday, April 7, [SB 76](#) by Senator Jim Boyd (R-Bradenton) was read a third time on the Senate floor and passed with 27 yeas and 13 nays.

The bill makes various changes to address issues related to property insurance policies, claims, and litigation. The bill:

- Provides federal standard for award of contingency fee multipliers under property insurance policies;
- Adjusts the claim filing deadline to 2 years after the date of loss; applies to hurricanes and other perils; and
- Requires a pre-suit notice of intent to initiate litigation be served at least 60 days before filing suit and requires the notice to specify the reason for the suit, the demand, and the amount of reasonable attorney fees incurred by the claimant.

SB 76 will now go to the House for consideration.

AIF supports legislative efforts that prevent unscrupulous actors from taking advantage of property insurance disputes which keeps insurance rates low and allows growth in Florida businesses.

TAXATION

SB 50 & HB 15 – Relating to Taxation

On Wednesday, April 7, [SB 50](#) by Senator Joe Gruters (R-Sarasota) was substituted on the House floor for HB 15 by Representative Chuck Clemons (R-Jonesville) and was amended on second reading and was rolled to third reading.

This bill requires marketplace providers and out-of-state retailers with no physical presence in Florida (such as online retailers) to collect Florida's sales tax on sales of taxable items delivered to purchasers in Florida if the marketplace provider or out-of-state retailer makes a substantial number of sales into Florida. A substantial number of remote sales means conducting any number of taxable remote sales in an amount exceeding \$100,000 during the previous calendar year.

SB 50 will now be read a third time on the House floor and will receive votes.

AIF supports legislation that provides a level playing field for Florida's brick and mortar stores and online retailers.